

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A method of producing a phenol novolak resin having an ortho ratio of 30% or more according to the following method (1) ~~or (2)~~:

(1) a method of reacting a phenol and an aldehyde using an oxalic acid catalyst at 110 to 160°C under pressure;

~~(2) a method of reacting a phenol and an aldehyde under pressure while removing the heat of reaction by a condenser with controlling a pressure so that water or an organic solvent present in the reaction system is refluxed,~~

wherein the phenol is ortho-cresol.

2. (original): The method of producing a phenol novolak resin according to Claim 1 wherein the aldehyde is formaldehyde.

3. (canceled).

4. (previously presented): The method of producing a phenol novolak resin according to any one of Claims 1 to 2 wherein the ortho ratio of the phenol novolak resin is from 30 to 60%.

5-9. (canceled).